

Message Text

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ORIGIN HA-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CA-01 H-01
SCS-06 /049 R

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-----024470 311748Z /43

R 311651Z MAY 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY PARIS
INFO USMISSION GENEVA
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 137337

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, VN

SUBJECT: VIETNAM FAMILY REUNIONS WITH AMERICAN CITIZENS

1. THERE HAS BEEN GROWING CONGRESSIONAL AND PUBLIC CONCERN RECENTLY ABOUT PLIGHT OF CHILDREN AND OTHER CLOSE RELATIVES OF AMERICAN CITIZENS IN VIETNAM WHO ARE UNABLE TO LEAVE TO BE REUNITED WITH THEIR FAMILIES IN THE U.S. WE UNDERSTAND SOME CONGRESS MEMBERS (E.G., SENATORS MATHIAS, PERCY, AND KENNEDY) ARE COMMUNICATING WITH VIETNAMESE DIRECTLY ON BEHALF OF SPECIFIC CASES. THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL NEWS ARTICLES IN AFTERMATH OF HUMPHREY-TRUONG ESPIONAGE CASE HIGHLIGHTING SUCH CASES AND NOTING THAT HUMPHREY SUCCEEDED
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IN GETTING HIS FIANCEE OUT APPARENTLY ONLY AFTER HE BEGAN PASSING CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS.

2. AMERICAN RED CROSS AND ICRC HAVE CONTINUED TO TAKE THE LEAD ON THIS HUMANITARIAN PROBLEM. ICRC HAS TRANSMITTED LISTS WITH CLOSE TO 300 CHILDREN, WIVES, AND FIANCEES TO SRV RED CROSS IN HANOI. WHEN SRV RED CROSS OFFICIALS

VISITED GENEVA IN EARLY APRIL, ICRC GAVE THEM SHORTER LIST OF 15 AMCIT CHILDREN HOLDING U.S. PASSPORTS. VIETNAMESE RED CROSS RESPONSE IN THESE RECENT CONTACTS IS THAT SUBJECT MUST BE DEALT WITH IN U.S.-SRV OFFICIAL CHANNELS.

3. THIS ATTITUDE IS NOW APPARENTLY BEING COMMUNICATED WITHIN VIETNAM AS WELL, JUDGING FROM INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM SOME RELATIVES. PREVIOUSLY THE EXCUSE FOR DELAY WAS THAT DOCUMENTS NEEDED TO BE EXAMINED CAREFULLY, THAT ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS HAD TO BE PROVIDED, ETC. WE HAVE NOW RECEIVED A COPY OF A LETTER FROM THE GUARDIAN OF ONE OF THE AMCIT CHILDREN IN HO CHI MINH VILLE, QUOTING SRV OFFICIALS AT THE "OFFICE OF FOREIGNERS" AS RECOGNIZING THAT THE CHILD HAS AMERICAN NATIONALITY, AND STATING: "PRESENTLY WE DON'T HAVE A POLICY TO SOLVE THIS PROBLEM. WHEN WE RECEIVE A LIST INCLUDING HIS NAME THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS, WE WILL SOLVE HIS SITUATION." THE SRV OFFICIALS RETURNED THE DEPARTURE APPLICATION AND FILE TO THE GUARDIAN.

4. WE ASSUME RELATIVES OF FRENCH AND POSSIBLY OTHER NATIONALS ARE CONTINUING TO BE ABLE TO ARRANGE THEIR DEPARTURE FROM VIETNAM, E.G., ON THE WEEKLY AIR FRANCE FLIGHTS.

5. WE WOULD APPRECIATE BRIEF UPDATE FROM BANGKOK AND
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PARIS ON FAMILY REUNION EFFORTS FOR RELATIVES OF AMERICANS, INCLUDING INFO ON SPECIAL CASES ON WHICH WE HAVE ASKED FRENCH TO ASSIST.

CHRISTOPHER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT, DEPENDENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE137337
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: FASIEVERTS:LIF
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780227-0954
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978052/aaaaabks.tel
Line Count: 99
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 49c1ba96-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN HA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2572024
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VIETNAM FAMILY REUNIONS WITH AMERICAN CITIZENS
TAGS: SHUM, SREF, CASC, VN, US, ICRC
To: BANGKOK PARIS
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/49c1ba96-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014